

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 HA-05 /035 W
-----024313 141727Z /46

O 141521Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7121

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3201

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PPDC, NU
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA

REF: A) MANAGUA 3125, B) STATE 172394, C) PASTOR-SOLAUN TELCON
OF 7/10/78, D) SOLAUN-MATTHEWS TELCON OF 7/11/78

SUMMARY: BECAUSE OF THE RECENT UPSURGE INVIOLENCE, THE
POTENTIAL PROBLEMS, IF THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE IS DELIVERED
AS INSTRUCTED, AND BECAUSE THE OBJECTIVE OF THE MESSAGE HAS
ALREADY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, EMB REQUESTS AUTHORIZATION TO
RETURN THE MESSAGE. EMB SUGGEST RELEASE OF A PUBLIC, NOT
PRIVATE, EXPRESSION OF CONCERN AND CALL FOR DEMOCRATIC
ACTION. END SUMMARY.

1. AS REPORTED (REF A), AMB ORALLY PRESENTED PRESIDENT
CARTER'S MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA (REF B). IN LIGHT OF
TELEPHONEC INSTRUCTIONS FROM NSC (PASTOR) AND ARA/CEN
(MATTHEWS) REGARDING THE DESIREABILITY OF MAINTAINING THE
CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE, EMB BELIEVES
THIS WAS MOST SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED BY ORAL
PRESENTATION.

2. EMB FULLY AGREES THAT IT WOULDHAVE BEEN UNFORTUNATE
TO HAVE THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE MADE PUBLIC AT A TIME
OF ONGOING NATIONAL GUARD (GN) PROTESTOR CLASHES WHICH
HAVE RESULTED IN SEVERAL DEATHS. IT IS CLEAR TO THE EMB
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THAT SOMOZA WOULD HAVE SOUGHT TO USE THE MESSAGE ASNAN
INDICATION OF US SUPPORT AT A TIME WHEN IT COULD ONLY
HAVE OUTRAGE OPPOSITION POLITICIANS AND WOULD HAVE
GENERATED STRONG ANTI-US SENTIMENT, THUS UNDERCUTTING
OUR MODERATING, CONSTRUCTIVE INFLUENCE.

3. THE SAME SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED THE NSC, THE

DEPARTMENT, AND THE EMBASSY TO CONCLUDE THAT A PUBLIC RELEASE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE STILL PERTAINS AND IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE FOR SOME TIME. TO BE UNILATERALLY ADDRESSING SOMOZA EXCLUSIVELY CONGRATULATING HIM FOR CONSTRUCTIVE INITIATIVES DURING A PERIOD OF ONGOING CIVIL-MILITARY CONFRONTATIONS WOULD BE INTERPRETED AS, AT LEAST, GROSS INSENSITIVITY AND PROBABLY ALSO PORTRAYED AS A REVERSAL OF US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. THE OPPOSITION HAS ATTACKED SOMOZA'S ELECTORAL REFORM PROPOSALS AND WOULD SEE COMPLIMENTARY REFERENCE TO SOMOZA'S PROPOSAL AS A SLAP IN THE FACE.

4. EMB AGREES THAT SOMOZA HAS MADE SOME ACCOMMODATING MOVES WHICH DESERVE RECOGNITION AND THAT HE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE IN THIS DIRECTION. WE BELIEVE THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE WAS WELL DESIGNED TO ACCOMPLISH THESE TWO PURPOSES. HOWEVER, FROM SOMOZA'S REACTION TO THE ORAL PRESENTATION OF THE MESSAGE, WE BELIEVE THE OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED.

5. THE RISK ATTENDANT TO PRESENTING THE LETTER'S TEXT TO SOMOZA NOW IS THAT SOMOZA WOULD BE ANTAGONIZED BY A REQUEST TO NOT MAKE PUBLIC THE PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE WHICH HE WOULD SEE AS IMPORTANT POLITICAL CAPITAL. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT EITHER THE PRESIDENT IS OFFENDED, AND THE LETTER COULD BE LEAKED OR, MORE SERIOUSLY, A DISTORTED VERSION OF THE LETTER, WHICH EMPHASIZED THE CONFIDENTIAL

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COMPLIMENTARY TONE WHILE ELIMINATING THE CALL FOR FOLLOW THROUGH ON THE INITIATIVES, COULD BE CIRCULATED.

6. BECAUSE WE SEE THE PURPOSE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED BY THE ORAL PRESENTATION BY THE AMB, AND ARE CONCERNED BY POTENTIALLY SERIOUS PROBLEMS THAT COULD RESULT FROM DELIVERY OF THE LETTER

EVEN WITH A REQUEST THAT IT BE HELD INCONFIDENCE, EMB WOULD PREFER TO NOT DELIVER THE LETTER.

7. THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN NICARAGUA IS DISTURBING AND FLOWS IN PART FROM THE LACK OF A RESPONSIBLE OPPOSITION STANCE. THEY HAVE LARGELY CONFINED THEIR ACTIVITIES TO DEMANDING THAT SOMOZA STEP DOWN IMMEDIATELY. THE EMB SEES THE POSSIBILITY FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE PUBLIC STATEMENT OF US POLICY. IT SHOULD LAMENT INCREASING INCIDENCE OF VIOLENT CONFRONTATION AND CALL ON ALL PARTIES TO SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE INITIATIVES TOWARD DEMOCRATIC CHANGE. SUCH A STATEMENT COULD, PASSIM, TAKE NOTE OF SOMOZA'S INITIATIVES.

8. IF DEPT. AND NSC AGREE THAT, IN LIGHT OF CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, SUCH A PUBLIC STATEMENT WOULD BE CONTRUCTIVE, EMB WOULD BE PLEASE TO SUGGEST APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: AUTHORIZATION TO RETURN THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE WHEN IT ARRIVES.
SOLAUN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANAGU03201
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P780187-2570, D780289-0418
Format: TEL
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780759/aaaabxxl.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7bff9d73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MANAGUA 3125, 78 STATE 172394
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2005052
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NO TITLE
TAGS: PGOV, PPDC, PINS, NU, US, (SAMOZA DEBAYLE, ANASTASIO), (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7bff9d73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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20 Mar 2014
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